

Appendix 7

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NEWS RELEASE- PLAN ANNOUNCEMENT

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Hospital Association are developing a plan to vaccinate selected emergency response and medical workers in Kansas against smallpox. These efforts are in keeping with the National Smallpox Vaccination Plan approved by President Bush.

“By vaccinating those persons who would first respond to a suspected case of smallpox, the ability to protect the public is strengthened,” said Gianfranco Pezzino, M.D., M.P.H., State Epidemiologist. “An intentional release of smallpox virus is very unlikely, but because the potential consequences of such a release are so great, the public health system must be prepared.”

Due to severe side effects associated with the vaccine, and because there is no evidence that smallpox exists anywhere in the natural environment, the vaccine would be offered only to selected emergency response and medical workers who volunteer to be vaccinated and pass a medical screening.

Health care workers would be vaccinated at clinics to be held throughout Kansas. The locations, dates and times of those clinics have yet to be determined, but will be announced within the next few weeks.

Other plans are being developed to vaccinate civilians if smallpox were to resurface as a public health threat. These include plans to vaccinate only persons who had been in contact with a limited number of smallpox cases, as well as plans to vaccinate the population as a whole in response to a widespread outbreak.

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NEWS RELEASE- CLINICS

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Hospital Association today announced the sites of clinics where selected emergency response and medical workers will voluntarily be immunized against smallpox. The effort to vaccinate the workers is in keeping with the National Smallpox Vaccination Plan approved by President Bush.

Due to severe side effects associated with the vaccine, and because there is no evidence that smallpox exists anywhere in the natural environment, the vaccine is being offered only to selected emergency response and medical workers who volunteer to be vaccinated and pass a medical screening.

The locations, times, and dates of the clinics are as follows:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

“In order to protect the public, we must ensure those who would first respond to the first cases of smallpox be immune to the disease and not transmit it to others,” said Gianfranco Pezzino, M.D., M.P.H., State Epidemiologist. “Although there is no evidence that smallpox exists outside of laboratories, the public health system must be prepared.”

It is likely that some workers would develop adverse reactions to the vaccine despite the screening. Health professionals staffing the clinics would review health risk information with the workers before they are vaccinated. Workers would be allowed to decline vaccination after reviewing the risk information. In addition, workers would be required to acknowledge the risk of adverse reaction as they complete a signed consent form that they would have to submit in order to be vaccinated.

Health officials are also encouraging the affected workers to consult their family physicians about their decision to volunteer to receive the vaccine. The vaccine itself does not contain smallpox virus.

Other plans are being developed to vaccinate civilians if smallpox were to resurface as a public health threat. These include plans to vaccinate only persons who had been in

contact with a limited number of smallpox cases, as well as plans to vaccinate the population as a whole in response to a widespread outbreak.

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NEWS RELEASE- SEVERE ADVERSE

Some public health and medical workers who were voluntarily vaccinated against smallpox have developed severe adverse reactions to the vaccine. A 'severe adverse reaction' is defined as _____.

As of _____ today, _____ persons out of _____ vaccinated have experienced a severe adverse reaction to the vaccine, based on data compiled by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Epidemiological Services. (_____ deaths have occurred.)

"We are working with those people who have experienced adverse reactions and are providing information and support to their physicians," said State Epidemiologist Gianfranco Pezzino, M.D., M.P.H. "Everyone who volunteered to be vaccinated is to be commended on their dedication to keeping others safe."

Pezzino emphasized that vaccinating the workers was necessary to protect them in the event they would be called upon to respond to a potential bioterrorist attack. Kansas vaccinations are conducted as part of the National Smallpox Response Plan announced by the Bush administration.

Health officials had predicted that some who received the vaccine would experience severe reactions, and workers were given a thorough medical screening and advised about the risks of the vaccine before being vaccinated.

Other workers who were vaccinated have experienced lesser reactions that health officials acknowledge can still be fairly intense. This can include an illness that is NOT smallpox for up to three weeks after receiving the vaccination.

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NEWS RELEASE- PLAN CONCLUSION

Kansas health officials today announced the scheduled conclusion of the campaign to vaccinate selected emergency response and medical personnel against smallpox. The vaccination campaign was conducted in accordance with the National Smallpox Response Plan.

“Our front-line health care providers are now much better prepared to deal with the possibility of a smallpox event,” stated Gianfranco Pezzino, M.D., M.P.H., State Epidemiologist. “This was a very difficult, yet very necessary step to protect our society against the risk of a bioterrorist event involving smallpox.”

_____ workers out of _____ vaccinated experienced severe adverse reactions to the vaccine. (_____ workers died.) Still more experienced illness, time away from work, and other less severe but still fairly intense reactions. The above data was compiled by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Epidemiological Services.

The lessons learned from vaccinating the workers will be applied if it ever becomes necessary to vaccinate civilians against smallpox, either on a limited basis or statewide. Other plans are being developed to vaccinate civilians if smallpox were to resurface as a public health threat.

Pezzino emphasized that vaccinating the workers was necessary to protect the population as a whole from a potential bioterrorist attack, and was conducted as part of the National Smallpox Response Plan announced by the Bush administration.

Health officials had predicted that some who received the vaccine would experience severe reactions, and workers were given a thorough medical screening and advised about the risks of the vaccine before being vaccinated.